

# The THOREAU SOCIETY BULLETIN

BULLETIN ONE HUNDRED EIGHTEEN

WINTER 1972

## GLEASON, UNFORGOTTEN PHOTOGRAPHER

by Arthur G. Volkman

Some twenty years ago I had an overnight guest, who stayed for breakfast the following morning. We sat up late the day of his arrival talking about natural history in general and Thoreau in particular. A few days later I was surprised to receive from him in repayment a copy of Herbert W. Gleason's book Through the Year With Thoreau, Boston and New York, 1917, with the price still in it, 25¢. Like many another book I glanced through it casually, and put it in the bookcase to lay neglected until recently. My interest in it and its author was revived on buying A Thoreau Gazetteer by Robert F. Stowell. The Gazetteer contained six of Gleason's photographs of Concord, and also his map of Thoreau's Concord. This sent me back to the bookcase for my copy of Through the Year, for I figured, if Stowell thought some parts of it were worthy of incorporation in his Gazetteer, it must be a valuable contribution to the life of Thoreau. I found I was not mistaken.

The Home Garden magazine for December 1967 contained an article by Walter Harding entitled, "A Gift from Walden Woods. Selected excerpts from the writings of Thoreau, illustrated with photographs made on the scene by H. W. Gleason--an 8-page portfolio." Following a short introduction on the works and life of Thoreau, Harding wrote: "Herbert W. Gleason, a Boston photographer, became interested in Thoreau's works when he was commissioned to illustrate the twenty-volume Writings of Thoreau in 1906 by Houghton Mifflin Company...."

"Houghton Mifflin used about a hundred of Gleason's photographs in their edition, but the project so captured his [Gleason's] imagination, that he devoted a good part of the next forty-odd years to photographing the Thoreau country until he had more than twelve hundred choice examples. In 1917, to commemorate the centennial of Thoreau's birth, Gleason published Through the Year With Thoreau, a volume of excerpts from the Journals and other writings illustrated with his own pictures...."

"Gleason's original glass plates and negatives are now, appropriately, owned by Roland Robbins of Lincoln, Mass., the 'pick and shovel historian' who discovered the exact site of Thoreau's cabin in 1946. He has kindly allowed Home Garden to choose from among the choicest of the glass plates for reproduction."

It is true, as stated by Harding, the 1906 edition of The Writings of Henry David Thoreau does contain about one hundred photographs taken by Gleason. But to my mind the publishers did Gleason an injustice by not mentioning his name on the

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title page as illustrator. However, on page VI of the Publishers Advertisement it notes that for the pictures therein the reader is indebted to Mr. Herbert W. Gleason, whose services in illustrating this edition the Publishers account themselves especially fortunate in securing.

Speaking in his own behalf Gleason writes in the introduction to Through the Year With Thoreau, page XXVIII, in part as follows: "It was the lot of the writer to be exiled (speaking subjectively) from New England for a period of some sixteen years, this period being spent in the State of Minnesota...." And later adds "... that the writer [Gleason] first became acquainted with the portions of Thoreau's journal published in the eighties by his friend, Mr. H. G. O. Blake; and the reading of these, with their vivid delineation of characteristic New England scenes, sacredly cherished in memory, aroused a passionate longing to visit the region so intimately described by Thoreau and enjoy a ramble among his beloved haunts. Consequently, at the close of the 'exile' above noted, an early opportunity was seized to visit Concord, with camera in hand, and many photographic momments were taken of localities associated with Thoreau. But this was only the beginning. During the fifteen years succeeding, the writer has made frequent pilgrimages to Concord, under all conditions of season and weather, searching out places and objects described by Thoreau, treading in his footsteps so far as they were discoverable, and bringing back photographs of all that was most interesting. Out of the many hundred views thus taken a brief series is chosen for reproduction in this volume [Through the Year With Thoreau.]"

Through the Year With Thoreau contains approximately one hundred photographs, about fourteen of which had already appeared entirely or partially, in the 1906 edition of The Writings of Thoreau. One important feature lacking in Through the Year is Gleason's map of Concord that was a part of the 1906 edition of The Writings. Gleason's note on this map reads as follows: "The material used in this Map of Concord has been derived from a variety of sources. The town bounds, streets, and residences have been taken from a township map of Middlesex County made by H. F. Walling in 1856, reference also being had to a local map of Concord by the same engineer, dated 1852, on which credit for the surveys of White Pond and Walden Pond is given to 'H. D. Thoreau, Civ. Engr....'"

"All names of places are those used by Thoreau, no attention being given to other names perhaps more current either in his own time or at present. Only such names of residents are given as are mentioned in the Journal."



"The identification of localities which were named by Thoreau apparently for his personal use alone has been accomplished, so far as it has proceeded, by a careful study of all the Journal references to each locality, an examination of a large number of Thoreau's manuscript surveys, and an extended personal investigation on the ground...."

"Hon. F. B. Sanborn, Judge John S. Keyes, Dr. Edward W. Emerson, the Misses Hosmer, and others among the older residents of Concord have been consulted in the preparation of the map, and have kindly supplied helpful information from their personal acquaintance with Thoreau." (It is unfortunate that Gleason left no record of his conversations with these folks concerning Thoreau.)

From the preceding one can see at a glance that the map is of inestimable value to readers of the Journal and others. Since its original publication in The Writings the map has appeared at various times in other publications. Probably the best copy was the one appearing in The Thoreau Society Bulletin No. 10, January, 1944. The Index to Walden by Joseph Jones, Austin, Texas, 1955, contains a copy as does Carl Bode's Selected Journals of Henry David Thoreau, a Signet paperback, New York, 1967. The 1884 edition of Summer contains a reproduction of the Walling map of the town of Concord, 1852. If Gleason did no other service to Thoreauvians other than he performed in identifying the spots to which Thoreau gave specific names our debt to him would still be great.

As far as I can learn the first Concord photographs by Gleason appeared in Thoreau-The Poet Naturalist, by William Ellery Channing, Boston, 1902, which contains three. Following Through the Year Gleason published an article in The National Geographic Magazine, February, 1920, entitled "Winter Rambles in Thoreau's Country, with 15 photographs," two or three of which were in Through the Year.

Needless to say Gleason, as his photographs of Concord scenes testify, was a superb photographer. Moreover, he was an accomplished author as well. His introduction to Through the Year With Thoreau covers thirty-one pages that give an illuminating account of Thoreau's life and principles; he selected many apt quotations from Walden and the Journals to elucidate the text. Perhaps the publication of Through the Year did much to help increase Thoreau's popularity, and arouse interest in him. It was the foremost of similar books to follow.

Thoreau was 37 years old when Herbert Wendell Gleason, who was destined to saunter in his travels around Concord, was born in Malden, Mass., June 5, 1855. He was a graduate of Malden High School, Union Theological Seminary, and Andover Theological Seminary in 1881. He was ordained a Congregational minister in 1887, and was pastor of the Como Avenue Church in Minneapolis, Minn., from 1885 to 1900, when he retired from the ministry on account of ill health. After leaving the church he devoted the balance of his life to literary work and lecturing, traveling extensively in the far west for pictures and subject matter. He also contributed articles to horticultural magazines on mushrooms and other plants found in his wide travels. Among his friends he numbered Luther Burbank. In addition to Through the Year With Thoreau and "Winter Rambles in Thoreau's Country," he copyrighted an address on National parks and monuments given at the National Parks Conference in Washington, D. C., January 3, 1917, and fifty photographs of scenes from Mt. Monadnock, 1921. Gleason died in Boxbury, Mass., on Oct. 6, 1937.

"It is not a man's duty to devote himself to the eradication of any, even the most enormous wrong; he may still properly have other concerns to engage him; but it is his duty to wash his hands of it...." H. D. T.

#### REPORT OF THE WALKING SOCIETY by Mary R. Fenn

We often hear our time referred to as a restless period - where people are on the move, not only in vacation traveling but in living in one part of the country and then another as the bread winner of the family's job dictates. "Not at all like the good old days," we sigh, "where generations of the same family were brought up on the same farm." It is true in Concord that many old family names today are the very ones which we find among the founders of the town. We always feel a deep sense of continuity as we gather in the meetinghouse to attend the affairs of the church and hear the moderator call to order the "three hundred and thirty seventh annual meeting of the First Parish in Concord."

And yet, when it comes to the Concord Authors, they did move about an amazing number of times. For example, the Old Manse was built by Ralph Waldo Emerson's grandfather, and when Emerson's first wife died, he and his mother lived there for some time. In fact he wrote his famous essay Nature in the upstairs study. After the death of his step-grandfather, the Rev. Ezra Ripley, the Manse was rented by Nathaniel Hawthorne and his bride. Mrs. Alcott and Elizabeth Hoar helped get things in order for their reception, and Henry Thoreau planted the vegetable garden. Both Thoreau and Emerson, as well as Ellery Channing, were frequent callers and even dinner guests of the Hawthornes, and it was in the same upstairs study that Mosses From an Old Manse was written.

When the Alcotts moved to Concord they lived in the house known even today as the Dove Cote - so called by Louisa May Alcott when in Little Women she made it the first home of Meg and John. Later they bought the old Revolutionary muster master's house on Lexington Road calling it Hillside. Later they sold it to Hawthorne who called it Wayside. Still later it was the home of Margaret Sidney author of The Five Little Peppers. When the Alcotts returned to Concord, they bought the house next door which they named Orchard House, and Thoreau helped plant trees there to beautify the grounds. Here Little Women was written. Here Thoreau and Emerson were frequent callers and the shy Hawthorne an infrequent one and that only for the sake of propriety. The Alcotts lived there for twenty years until the old folks moved to Anna's house on Main Street where the Thoreaus had once lived. The Thoreau family was constantly on the move, and several houses in Concord are associated with them; the Virginia Road house where Henry was born, the Parkman House, the Texas House, and the Main Street House where Thoreau died.

It was Emerson more than any of the others who kept his hospitable doors open to the Concord group. Here again, Thoreau tended the garden and planted trees - even living with the family during Emerson's absence on his lecture tours.

It was in the back garden, along the mill brook that Emerson commissioned Alcott to build a summer house, assisted by Thoreau, who did not think much of its ridiculously exaggerated rustic design - a design so outlandish that Madam Emerson dubbed it "The Ruin" before it was even finished. It was from Emerson's house that the original Walking Society set out on their Sunday morning strolls as soon as the



meetinghouse doors had closed behind the last stragglers.

Thoreau, Hawthorne, Channing, and Sanborn belonged to the Walking Society and even Alcott, though the other men complained that he was apt to settle down on the first stump they came to and expound on one of his theories. It was at the Emerson house that many of Alcott's conversations were held, although Mrs. Thoreau also entertained the group at her home. A reception was given by Emerson to Hawthorne upon his return from Rome. Since every literary person of note, as well as the lunatic fringe, beat a path to the Philosopher's door, often staying two or three weeks at a time, I have always considered Mrs. Emerson as unsung heroine to have put up with it all.

If all this moving about is confusing to tourists as they make a pilgrimage to Concord's literary shrines, at least it does point out how close the Concord Authors were to each other as friends and neighbors, even to living in the same houses in three instances, though at different times.

"I believe that what so saddens the reformer is not his sympathy with his fellows in distress, but though he be the holiest son of God, his private ail. Let this be righted, and he will forsake his generous companions without apology."

--- H. D. T., Walden.

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"My Aunt Maria asked me to read the life of Dr. Chalmers, which, however, I did not promise to do. Yesterday, Sunday, she was heard through the partition shouting to my Aunt Jane, who is deaf, 'Think of it! He stood half an hour to hear the frogs croak, and he would'nt read the life of Chalmers!'" --H.D.T.

WALDEN AND A CARLYLE LETTER by Raymond D. Gozzi

Thomas Carlyle wrote a letter to his friend Emerson on August 18, 1841, that appears to have remarkably influenced Henry Thoreau. Thoreau was 24 years old at the time and living at the Emersons'. A portion of this letter will, I believe, make various bells ring in the minds of readers of Walden.

Carlyle tells of how a house, Newington Lodge, was gotten for him for his vacation in Scotland. But

...Newington Lodge, when I came to inspect it with eyes, proved to be too tough an undertaking--the Cynic snarled, 'Give me a whole Tub rather! I want nothing but shelter from the elements, and to be let alone of all men.' After a little groping, this little furnished cottage, close by the beach of the Solway Frith, was got hold of; here we have been, in absolute seclusion, for about a month,--no company but the cornfields and the everlasting sands and brine; mountains and the thousand-voiced memories on all hands, sending their regards to one, from the distance. Daily (sometimes even nightly!) I have swashed about in the sea; I have been perfectly idle, at least inarticulate; I fancy I feel myself considerably sounder of body and of mind. Deeply do I agree with you in the unfathomable meaning of a colloquy with the dumb Ocean, with the dumb Earth, and their eloquence! A Legislator would prescribe some weeks of this annually as a religious duty for all mortals, if he could. A Legislator will prescribe it for himself, since he can!¹

Emerson, in his reply of October 30, 1841, said to Carlyle, "You can say nothing of yourself that will not greatly interest us all." Among the "us all" was young Henry Thoreau, whose first literary task while at Walden was to complete an extended essay on Carlyle, notes for which he had been gathering since 1842.²

1. Joseph Slater, ed. The Correspondence of Emerson and Carlyle. (New York, 1964), p. 305.

2. Walter Harding, The Days of Henry Thoreau. (New York, 1965), p. 187.

"We remember how we itched, not how our hearts beat." Journal, June 11, 1851 -- H. D. T.

LONGFELLOW REVISED by Edward Stephenson

Thoreau often included passages of poetry in his prose works. In many cases, as in A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers, this poetry was his own. But just as often it was not. In his posthumously published Cape Cod (1865), Thoreau included an excerpt from Longfellow's "Seaweed."¹ Longfellow's poem had been published in November, 1849, as part of The Seaside and the Fireside. A month before this, Thoreau had taken the first of four walking excursions to the Cape. Thoreau does not include all of the poem (perhaps because it was too long), but he does offer a comment on the section that he does include. However, Thoreau purposely altered or "revised" the final stanza of Longfellow's poem. In Thoreau's comment and revision we can see in



essence what Thoreau himself was trying to accomplish in his early poetry and later prose. Moreover, we can see the type of relationship that the Transcendentalist attempted to establish between man and his world.

In Chapter IV of Cape Cod, "The Beach," Thoreau, walking the twenty-eight mile "forearm" of the Cape, is attracted by the seaweed washed upon the shore by the breakers. He claims ignorance on the subject of seaweed, since "I live by a river-shore, where this weed does not wash up." He is "curious about it," as he was about all natural things. What "meadow" did it come from? He gives the "account of the matter" of one who is more "weatherwise" than he. This "one" is Longfellow. Thoreau then quotes the first three and one half stanzas of "Seaweed." Longfellow here describes how the storm winds dislodge seaweed from Bermuda, Bahama, San Salvador, and other places, and how this seaweed, together with the debris of wrecked ships, drifts on the "Currents of the restless main." If Thoreau had ended his excerpt here, the poem would be, in fact, simply another "account of the matter." But Longfellow did not intend only a factual account, and Thoreau did not misinterpret him. Keeping in mind the fact that Longfellow was here establishing a symbolic relationship between "seaweed" and the fragmentary productions of the poetic imagination, Thoreau then offers a comment before concluding his quotation of the fourth stanza: "But he [Longfellow] was not thinking of this shore, when he added:

'Till, in sheltered coves and reaches  
Of sandy beaches,

All have found repose again.'

Longfellow proceeds in the following stanzas to relate the storm winds directly to the emotional storm in the poetic soul, and the seaweed to the fragments produced by this poetic emotion. In Longfellow's view of the "matter," these fragments find "repose," as we see in his concluding stanza, in the controlled, traditional, ordered expression of them in "books."

But for Thoreau, this "weatherwise" poet was mistaken about "this shore," and it is precisely "this shore" that captivated Thoreau for almost a decade. He found anything but "repose" on the forearm of the Cape. Is Longfellow's symbolic relation, therefore, between "seaweed" and poetic utterances invalid for Thoreau? Far from it. For Thoreau, it is more valid than even Longfellow knew. Thoreau makes an editorial cut after the fourth stanza, thus eliminating the explicit symbolic relationship that Longfellow establishes. But he then establishes the symbolic relationship between seaweed and poetic production that more clearly shows the relationships which he wished to establish between himself and the natural world, and the artistic productions proceeding from this relationship: "These weeds were the symbols of those grotesque and fabulous thoughts which have not yet got into the sheltered coves of literature." Thoreau finds on "this shore" that these weeds are in fact "symbols," but symbols of a far more "fabulous" array of spiritual facts than even Longfellow imagined.

So, Thoreau substantially agrees with Longfellow in his use of seaweed as a symbol. But his "weatherwise" authority on the matter did not extend this symbol far, or rather, deep enough. Longfellow's symbolic relations did not include "this shore," the point of contact between man and the primal, natural (and, therefore, spiritual) movement and rhythms of the universe. Because Thoreau extends

the symbolic relationship, so also he extends Longfellow's conclusion. Note Thoreau's italicized addition to line 4:

"Ever drifting, drifting, drifting  
On the shifting

Currents of the restless heart,'

And not yet 'in books recorded

They, like hoarded

Household words, no more depart.'

Thoreau extends the possibilities of poetic expression to include the "fabulous," the more spiritually fundamental truths "not yet" found in books.

"And not yet." These words epitomize the Transcendental aspirations to capture and transmit the spiritual reality and unity of man's world. Thoreau is here revising a Longfellow poem. But in doing so he is enunciating the Transcendental theory of reality, a theory which is ultimately a "poetic" one. Thoreau was a poet, in the traditional sense of the term, for only a few years. Yet a glance at his Journals demonstrates that he was always a poet in spirit. These three words embody his poetic doctrines, doctrines which, ironically enough, he was able to adhere to best only in his prose. Cape Cod itself is an example of that adherence.

<sup>1</sup> Quotations from the text of Cape Cod refer to: H. D. Thoreau, Cape Cod (New York, 1961), pp. 79-80.

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#### A NOTE ON THE STRUCTURE OF WALDEN

by Raymond P. Tripp, Jr.

The organization of Walden, by sights, sounds, and seasons is well attested. But much less attention has been devoted to its argumentative structure and the way this resolves many problems of the book's construction and unity. Since Shanley first pointed out Thoreau's many small adjustments and minor revisions (and more recently R. E. Clapper),<sup>1</sup> it seems justifiable to look for the rationale that guided Thoreau's choices.

A new look at Walden with this in mind reveals a three-step argument, according to which the book falls into three distinct stages, each with its own special function in the dialectic of Thoreau's transcendental message. Attempting to communicate a truly new and imaginative view of life, Thoreau employs an argument in which ignorance is much more than "privative," but an aggressive condition that must be remedied before truth may be asserted and then integrated into the whole of life. Walden accordingly reflects the negative-positive-integrative pattern of its author's thought, even on the levels of word choice, syntax, paragraph construction, and chapter arrangement.

The first larger unit of Walden extends through its first six chapters, "Economy" through "Visitors." Here Thoreau is primarily negative, progressively eliminating everything not necessary to life and providing at the same time parallel refinements of consciousness, so that the reader's point of view keeps up with his message. The motion of thought is from gross economic errors through to mystical comprehension of the silence itself. The ordinary view of life is utterly reversed and re-aligned to the presence of divine "visitors," who may be closer to us than our actual friends.

Walden's next unit of six chapters, "The Bean-Field" through to "Brute Neighbors," is highly positive and assertive. Here, through a sequence of



chapters paralleling his first (often with humor if one compares "Visitors" with "Brute Neighbors"), Thoreau returns from the rarified atmosphere of spiritual silence to a re-examination of the everyday world, but this time from the totally new perspective of divine indifference prepared by his book's first "negative" unit. He concludes this second section with a review of social possibilities: the moral life is best. He returns, as it were, from "Solitude" with "Higher Laws" by way of the paradisiacal "Baker Farm."

Walden's concluding (and rather scientific) postscript is comprised by its last six chapters, "House-Warming" through "Conclusion." In these Thoreau is essentially integrative; he combines his external and internal explorations. Having probed the inner and outer worlds, he returns "indoors," joining nature, man, and spirit, past, present, and future in a truly universal "House-Warming." Finally, he summarizes his message in a most positive "Conclusion," that is a powerful epitome of the whole of Walden.

Any such scheme as this proposed requires, of course, considerable expansion and qualification, but it seems to me that attention to Thoreau's argument as well as to his imagery lends further insights into the structure of his book. Such details as his double chapters and the parallelism among them then take on new significances, as do the reciprocal harmonies between his first, longest, and most negative chapter "Economy" and his last, shortest, and most positive chapter "Conclusion." It becomes apparent too that each major group of six chapters exhibits the negative-assertive-integrative pattern of Thoreau's thought, each making a positive recovery according to the tenor of its larger context.

Viewing Walden, thus, as a transcendental argument eliminates many of the inconsistencies of less inclusive unifying devices and certainly goes a long way toward finally dismissing the persistent view that Walden is but a Brownian anthology.

<sup>1</sup>The Making of Walden, Chicago, 1957; and The Development of Walden: A Generic Text, PhD thesis, UCLA, 1967. (Reported in The Thoreau Society Bulletin, No. 107.)

University of Denver.

#### THE 1972 ANNUAL MEETING

It will be held on Saturday, July 15, 1972 in the First Parish Church in Concord. Speakers and program will be announced in the Spring bulletin.

#### NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The nominating committee, Roland Robbins, Chairman, has proposed the following slate of officers to be voted on at the July 15 annual meeting: Frederic T. McGill, Short Hills, New Jersey, president; Herbert Uhlig, Cambridge, Mass., president-elect; Mrs. Charles D. MacPherson, Acton, Mass., vice-president; Walter Harding, Geneseo, N.Y., secretary-treasurer--all for terms of one year; and Milton C. Paige, Jr., Concord, Mass. and Major Benton, Jr., Monson, Mass., members of the executive committee for three years. Further nominations may be forwarded to the committee chairman (RFD 2, Lincoln, Mass.) or presented at the annual meeting.

#### A GIFT TO THE SOCIETY

We are deeply grateful to life member August B.

Black of Morris, Illinois, who has recently donated to the Thoreau Society the sum of twelve hundred dollars, half of which is to cover the cost of printing our bulletins for the year 1972 and the other half of which is to go towards the cost of publishing a booklet on Thoreau as a surveyor which is being prepared now from Thoreau's original surveying papers in the Concord Free Public Library by Mrs. Marcia Moss, the reference librarian of the library. Says Mr. Black, "As a prairie lawyer I deal often with surveyors. As a class they are interesting people. They see a side of life many of us miss. Consider the coincidence that Thoreau and Lincoln were surveyors." Our thanks to Mr. Black for his contribution to the pleasure and interest of our members and his tribute to Thoreau.

#### NOTES AND QUERIES . . . .

Laurence Peter and Raymond Hull's PETER PRINCIPLE (New York: Bantam, 1970) tells the tale of a carpenter who gives away copies of WALDEN to avoid being promoted.

The WALL STREET JOURNAL for Nov. 23, 1971 features an A. C. Kaufman cartoon of a man reading WALDEN in the midst of a crowded subway car.

Celestial Arts (1345 Howard St., San Francisco) sell a large poster featuring Thoreau's "different drummer" quotation.

The BUFFALO EVENING NEWS for Sept. 26, 1971 featured a cartoon of a wife greeting her drunken husband at the door with, "What do you mean, you're marching to a different drummer? You're in no condition to march to ANY drummer."

Robert Colver of Raleigh, N. C., is now a life member of the society. Life membership is \$50.00.

Universal Frames are boasting in current ads that they are making an eyeglass frame "that would have brought Thoreau right out of his bean patch." We doubt it.

Your secretary gets a constant stream of inquiries about the Thoreau Society and its activities. The prize one so far is from a little boy in North Dakota who wrote, "I am studying on goat will you sene me some information." Henry got many people's goats, but we couldn't help the little boy very much. His letter incidentally was addressed to "Nateere Thouau Society."

In Bulletin 116, the figure under printing cost should have been \$410.76.

Raccoon Valley Press (Box 497, West Des Moines, Iowa) publish a striking series of 3 posters of Thoreau quotations.

Jack Douglas' WHAT DO YOU HEAR FROM WALDEN POND? (New York: Putnam, 1971), so far as we are concerned, is third rate satire on living the simple life. But we do like the dedication: "To Henry David Thoreau, who said, 'The spending of the best part of one's life earning money is a questionable pursuit.' And to J. Paul Getty, who said, 'Huh?'"

THE COMPLETE READER, edited by Richard S. Beal and Jacob Korg (Prentice-Hall, 1967, p.550) prints Emerson's well-known poem "Terminus" and assigns it to Thoreau.

Two University of Michigan students were recently expelled for turning in the same term paper on Thoreau's WALDEN-- and then it was discovered that each had purchased the paper separately from a local term paper writing service.

The State University of New York will once again sponsor three-week seminars on Thoreau and Transcendentalism in Concord, June 26 to July 14 and July 17 to August 4, respectively. For information write



your secretary.

The January 13, 1972 CAPE CODDER features a cartoon by Brooks showing Thoreau complaining that Cape Cod was getting too built up.

The Minn. Environmental Control Citizens Assoc. (26 E. Exchange St., St. Paul 55101) sell for \$1.20 a dozen, two different ecology greeting cards with quotations from Thoreau.

Your secretary receives so many requests for information on audio-visual aids (films, slides, tapes, and records) available for teaching about Thoreau that he has mimeographed a short list which any member may obtain by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope.

Douglas Noverr points out to us that the new edition of Robert Stowell's THOREAU GAZETTEER (Princeton, 1970) errs in stating that Thoreau stayed in Mackinaw City (on the lower peninsula in Michigan) on his return from Minnesota in 1861. Actually he stayed in Mackinaw on Mackinaw Island. Walter Harding makes a similar error in THE DAYS OF HENRY THOREAU.

Dissertations in progress at the moment: Brian Bond, "Henry David Thoreau's A WEEK: A Generic Study" (Bowling Green); Donald Dolton, "The Theme of Anticipation in Thoreau" (Washington); and Ronald Tranquilla, "The Relationship of Henry David Thoreau and the New England Transcendentalists" (Pittsburgh).

How does Thoreau stand in popularity with other nature writers today? The current BOOKS IN PRINT lists 54 titles available by Thoreau to 21 for Hudson, 12 for Muir, 6 for Burroughs, 6 for Walton, 4 for Gilbert White, and 2 for Jefferies. The current PAPERBOUND BOOKS IN PRINT lists Thoreau 40, Hudson 7, Muir 2, and others 0. The current Bartlett FAMILIAR QUOTATIONS cites 90 quotations from Thoreau, 23 from Walton, 7 from Burroughs, 1 each from Jefferies and Hudson, and 0 from White and Muir.

#### A NEW THOREAU ANECDOTE

Christopher P. Cranch, the Transcendentalist poet, records in an essay on "Symbolic Conceptions of the Deity" in Mrs. John T. Sargent's SKETCHES AND REMINISCENCES OF THE RADICAL CLUB (Boston, Osgood, 1880, p. 56) an anecdote about Thoreau that we have not seen elsewhere. He says Thoreau attended one of Alcott's "Conversations" which Alcott "began by saying, 'All souls are plural.' 'I'm sorry for that,' said Thoreau; 'one is more than I can take care of.'"

#### M. A. THESIS ABSTRACT FOR:

A TOPICAL GUIDE TO RESEARCH ON THE THOUGHT AND CHARACTER OF HENRY THOREAU. by Joseph R. McElrath, Jr.

The purpose of this work is to provide a means of introduction to the thought and character of Thoreau for those who are undertaking such a study for the first time. It begins with a general introduction to the various ways in which Thoreau has been viewed in the past and a suggestive discussion of how he might most fruitfully be approached at the present time. The primary emphasis of suggestions on approaching Thoreau is that he is best understood through what his works and particularly his method of composition reveal about his personality and the ideal conception of himself that he continually aspired to achieve.

The second section of the work presents thirty-two possible ways of approaching an understanding of Thoreau. "Thoreau's Concept of Nature" and "Thoreau's Transcendentalism" are typical subjects for

research offered to the reader. Under each such subject heading an explanatory note on the nature of that topic is provided. And within each topical section there is a list of books, parts of books, articles, and parts of articles which are immediately pertinent to that topic. Annotations are designed in terms of each bibliographic entry's relevance to the topic indicated in the subject heading. --Duquesne University, 1969.

ANOTHER EARLY REVIEW OF WALDEN: Christian Register, August 26, 1854.

WALDEN: OR LIFE IN THE WOODS. By Henry D. Thoreau. A young man, eight years out of college, of fine scholarship and original genius, revives, in the midst of our bustling times, the life of an anchorite. By the side of a secluded pond in Concord, he builds with his own hands a hut which cost him twenty-eight dollars and twelve and a half cents; and there he lived two and a half years, "cultivating poverty," because he "wanted to drive life into a corner, and reduce it to its lowest terms, and suck out all its marrow." Here he found that the labor of six weeks would support him through the year; and so he had long quiet days for reading, observation, and reflection, learning to free himself from all the hollow customs and false shows of the world, and to pity those who by slavery to inherited property seemed to be doing incredible and astonishing penance. In the account he gives us of his clothes, house, food, and furniture, we find mingled many acute and wise criticisms upon modern life; while in his descriptions of all living things around him, birds, fishes, squirrels, mice, insects, trees, flowers, weeds, it is evident that he had the sharpest eye and the quickest sympathy. One remarkable chapter is given to the sounds that came to his ear, with suggestions, full of poetry and beauty, of the feelings which these sounds awakened. But nothing interested him so much as the Pond, whose name gives the title to his book. He describes it as a clear sheet of water, about a mile in circumference; he bathed in it every morning: its cool crystal depths were his well, ready dug; he sailed upon its bosom in summer, he noted many curious facts pertaining to its ice in winter; in short, it became to him a living thing, and he almost worshipped it. But we must not describe the contents of this book any further. Its opening pages may seem a little caustic and cynical; but it mellows apace, and playful humor and sparkling thought appear on almost every page. We suppose its author does not reverence many things which we reverence; but this fact has not prevented our seeing that he has a reverential, tender, and devout spirit at bottom. Rarely have we enjoyed a book more, or been more grateful for many and rich suggestions. Who would have looked to the Walden Pond for a *Robinson Crusoe*, or for an observer like the author of the *Natural History of Solborne*, or for a moralist like the writer of *Religio Medici*? Yet paragraphs in this book have reminded us of each of these. And as we shut the book up, we ask ourselves, will the great lesson it teaches of the freedom and beauty of a simple life be heeded? Shall this struggle for wealth, and this bondage to the impedimenta of life, continue forever? Will the time ever come when it will be fashionable to be poor, that is, when men



will be so smitten with a purpose to seek the true ends of life that they will not care about laying up riches on the earth? Such times we know there have been, and thousands listened reverently to the reply, given in the last of these two lines, to the inquiry contained in the first;

"O where is peace, for thou its path hast trod?"  
 "In poverty, retirement, and with God"

Who can say that it is impossible that such a time may come round, although the fashion of this world now runs with such a resistless current in the opposite direction.

#### MORE DOCTORAL DISSERTATIONS ON THOREAU.

With the permission of the University of Microfilms of Ann Arbor, Mich., we continue printing here-with reproductions of abstracts of dissertations on Thoreau. The full dissertations are available from University Microfilms at the prices given at the ends of the abstracts:

#### THE MYSTICISM OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU (VOLUMES I AND II).

(Order No. 64-5372)

Charles Calvin Kopp, Ph.D.  
 The Pennsylvania State University, 1963

Although it has been one hundred years since Thoreau's death, the proper perspective of such mystical professions of his as "I am a yogi" and "I am a mystic" has never been satisfactorily established. Four outstanding critical works of the twentieth century that have attempted to evaluate the total meaning of Thoreau's life, relative to its mystical or non-mystical nature, have been Mark Van Doren's Henry David Thoreau, Arthur Christy's The Orient in American Transcendentalism, Joseph Wood Krutch's Henry David Thoreau, and Sherman Paul's The Shores of America. The substance of these works demonstrates that Thoreau's mysticism is a moot question. While Van Doren and Paul discount the success of Thoreau's mystical ventures, both agree that he not only desired to be but also believed himself to be a mystic. On the other hand, Christy and Krutch affirm Thoreau's mysticism with little or no qualifications. What is important, however, is that not one of these critics has made any thorough examination of acknowledged mystical practices in order to validate Thoreau's mystical or non-mystical position.

It was the purpose of this analysis to show that Henry Thoreau was not only a practicing mystic of the highest order, but that this intelligence is necessary to make any comprehensive interpretation of his life and literary efforts. To this end, all of his published works were examined to find the strands of his spiritual "metamorphosis" and to what "intellectual and moral" state it was preparing him for. In addition, an attempt was made to find if he deliberately patterned his life on mystical principles. Therefore, the type of life that he lived and the substance of his beliefs found in his major works, such as his Journals, the Week, and Walden, his miscellaneous essays, poems, and letters, were compared with the published mystical literature and scriptures of three great traditions: Christian, Hindu, and Buddhist. Particular attention was given to a comparison of Thoreau with such mystics as Plotinus, Meister Eckhart, Thomas Traherne, Jonathan Edwards, Rabindranath Tagore, and Eugen Herzigel.

From these investigations, it was found that Henry Thoreau's spiritual awareness stemmed from the main spring of American mystical tradition, that his mystical beliefs and practices coincided with those of Jonathan Edwards and John Woolman, and that he should in no way be linked totally with Emerson and Transcendentalism. It was further established that Thoreau had a natural predilection for mystical awareness, the mystical doctrine that the world of appearances is only māyā, and that Reality, or Intelligence, lies in and behind appearances. But through his clarified senses, by living the "purely sensuous" life, Thoreau became aware of the Ding an sich, the oneness of Being.

At the next stage of Thoreau's metamorphosis, it was found that he came to grips with the fundamental mystical doctrine of duality, the dichotomy of to be versus to have. And like all mystics, Thoreau recognized that only by living a life of purity and simplicity could the multiplicity of time and the world be effaced in order to accomplish his mystical rebirth.

But while the channels of purity were open, Thoreau was engaged in meditation and contemplation, the next stage of spiritual metamorphosis. It was observed that he had a natural propensity for the solitary life in contemplation, a life that discerns the nature of action in inaction and inaction in action. It was also shown that in contemplation, he experienced the highest and most creative "knowledge" known to man: "Sympathy with Intelligence."

This "knowledge" was the ultimate stage of his mystical metamorphosis, for it was established that he became aware of God, or Intelligence, in the unified vision, i.e., Thoreau as a perceiver of experience not only contained the All, but became unified with the thing perceived. It was further noted that from the oneness of the unified vision, there emerged a higher mysticism in which he perceived in the eternal "Now" moment, the presence of God or Intelligence in his soul.

In short, Thoreau's assertion that he was a mystic was interpreted neither as mere sympathy toward mysticism, nor as a deep interest, enthusiasm, or knowledge, but as the actual living experience of mystical awareness, i.e., Intelligence.

Microfilm \$5.75; Xerography \$20.30. 443 pages.

We are grieved to report the passing of life-member Edmund Fenn of Concord after a long illness. As long as he was able, he was a regular attendant at the annual meetings. He is survived by his wife Mary, a member of the executive committee and author of the "Concord Walking Society" reports, and a daughter, Mary Gail, who edited our recently issued map of the Easterbrook Country.

#### "THE NIGHT THOREAU SPENT IN JAIL"

Theatre history has been made with Lawrence and Lee's play, "The Night Thoreau Spent in Jail". 141 separate and different productions have resulted in more than 2,000 performances within a year-and-a-half, unprecedented in theatre records. This is the equivalent of a five-year-run on Broadway. The play was presented by major regional and university theatres through the American Playwrights Theatre.

Hal B. Wallis, with Paul Nathan as his associate, will produce the film for Universal from Lawrence and Lee's screenplay. Wallis plans to lens "Thoreau" in and around Concord, Massachusetts.

There have been standing ovations and turn-away business at the multiple productions, and 141 different directors and 141 different supporting casts. Goodman Theatre in Chicago reports its best business for this work in its 45-year history. Kent State presented the play on the anniversary of the tragic shooting there; the audience rushed onto the stage at the final curtain and embraced the actors.

At the Frank Lloyd Wright-designed theatre at Dallas Theatre Center, they had to repeat the run later in the year. Old Globe Theatre in San Diego reports their most successful non-Shakespearean play on record. Other major theatres included Arena in Washington, Alley in Houston, ACT in Seattle, Alliance in Atlanta, and UCLA, where co-author Robert E. Lee directed. Screen actress Jean Arthur directed at Vassar.